

[I have talked with Grandma Handy]

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From:

Clay County. [Tales?]

Mrs. Pansy Powell

Gower, Missouri.

Dear Mrs. Powell:

I have talked with Grandma Handy, and have gathered a little more information, some of which you may be able to use. I will repeat it in her words.

"In our family, the Dennis Parsons family, there were five negro slaves, four men and one negro cook. We had owned them for a long time.

"The men all had wives at other homes in the vicinity and on Saturday nights they spruced up and visited their wives and some of them had children also.

"We gave out negroes a holiday of one week, from Christmas Day to New Years. Sometimes they used that time making brooms to sell. We paid our negro woman \$1.00

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to get two meals a day during the holiday, and the rest of the time was her own. It was our custom for everyone to do a large amount of work on New Years's Day.

“Slaves in Clinton County very often ran away, but they didn't go far. The pad-a-rollers, men hired to hunt them in the woods at nigh soon brought them back. We had one man to run off. I was much frightened when they tied him up to lash him, but they never whipped him and he never ran away again.

“We sold one young negro boy, I remember, to George Huffaker for \$700. And another, our cook's boy, a good boy, died of heart trouble and we buried him in our private cemetery.

“During the war we sent the slaves to the south, and then the Emancipation Proclamation gave them their freedom and they all came 2 back. But they were not much account to work any more. Out Our old cook settled in an old house one fourth mile away and died there.

“Just after the Civil War flour was \$5.00 for twenty-five pounds and we ate cornbread mostly. We bought a cook stove—One of the first in the community. We set in the fireplace and let the pipe extend up through the chimney. We used it only in the summer and set it back in the winter to make it last longer.

“There were not Indians in Clinton County. In fact, I never in my life saw but one Indian. I was six years old and saw him traveling, riding a little pony, on the Lathrop road.

“I was at church one spring morning, and when we came outside, the air was full of grasshoppers, in brown herds. They ate everything bare as they went, the grass, gardens, leaves from the trees, and all the young corn. They finally passed on but everything had to be planted over.”

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I might add that Grandma Handy will be 87 years old next Tuesday and I am sending a little sorry story of her life to the Star which I hope they can use—you can watch for it.

Hoping this little bit more way help you some,

Sincerely,

Dela Handy.